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23 August 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Communist Bloc Support for the Pathet Lao  
Within Laos

- I. Personnel: Estimate total about 1500; nearly all North Vietnamese; 40-50 Soviet; perhaps a few Chinese at Pathet Lao headquarters.

The North Vietnamese personnel are serving as technicians in communications, logistics, radar, and maintenance. They operate anti-aircraft, artillery, and trucks, and serve as tactical advisers to troop commanders. They probably also are helping with the Pathet Lao political and propaganda effort in north and central Laos.

- II. Aircraft: About 25 aircraft engaged in Communist airlift into Laos, including 17 IL-2's and 9 IL-14's.

Some evidence that most of these, particularly the smaller IL-2's have been turned over to the North Vietnamese; therefore, the recent statement by a Soviet in Geneva that "only five Soviet aircraft" were operating in Laos may be technically correct.

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III. Bloc logistical support of the Pathet Lao continues at a high level. For this purpose, truck transport is now considerably more important in tonnage than airlift.

ABBOT SMITH

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